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KAROL SZYMANOWSKI'S OPERA *KING ROGER* – INDIVIDUATION, EROTIC TRANSGRESSION AND MUSICAL AESTHETICS

Introduction

Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937) wrote his second opera *King Roger* after his first one *Hagith* during the time he was 36-42 years of age and while he was staying in different places, in Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Austria and the United States. The opera's music was composed to a libretto written by his cousin Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. The historical-literary context of the libretto is twelfth century Sicily under the rule of King Roger, at whose court resided his mentor and great geographer, Edrisi, a sage of that time.

The opera *King Roger* can be analysed using Søren Kierkegaard's model applied by him to Mozart's opera *Don Juan*, where he distinguished three successive stages of erotica: the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious. Many critics have drawn attention to the Dionysian theme of *King Roger*, while others relate to the fashionable gender theory and emphasise the importance of the erotic layer in it.

In different productions of *King Roger*, Iwaszkiewicz's libretto is variously correlated with the music by Szymanowski. Iwaszkiewicz combined the last stage of individuation with the first stage, the religious with the erotic revelation. This creates complications that give reasons to undertake a psychoanalytical and archetypal approach. The most important relationship that then makes itself visible is that of *King Roger* and the Shepherd, and the hidden fantasies that arise from it.

In this paper we carry out the ego-analysis of the authors (Szymanowski and Iwaszkiewicz) and their creations, we conduct a study of the different egos forming the Self engaging the unconsciousness and consciousness. We look at the journey that *King Roger*'s self takes through the encounter with the Shepherd, leading him from the narcissistic ego to the androgynous ego. We analyse this through Freudian psychoanalysis looking at the Oedipal theme encrypted in the music and libretto, their inter-sexual (perverted) and intra-sexual (inverse) motifs as well as through Jung's archetypal psychology, with a focus on his theory of individuation.

In the Polish artistic legacy there are not many interesting and clearly developed

literary works about extreme problems of love. Apart from Witold Gombrowicz, Jan Lechoń, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz and Jerzy Andrzejewski, only a small group of Polish writers and poets of the twentieth century attempted to introduce psychoanalysis' discovered identities into the cultural discourse. Even fewer authors were inspired from the concept of individuation coined by Jung, i.e. the transformation of the individual ego into the Self during a multi-staged process of identification on the axis of: ego-mask, ego-shadow, animus-anima, wise old man-great mother and the self (king, priest, God).

I. What is Opera? Towards Psychoanalysis and Archetypal Psychology

Przybyszewski's psychoanalytic discoveries which preceded those of Freud did not affect the Polish cultural life to a great degree, mainly because his texts were written in German and had not yet been translated. Fortunately Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, who was mainly a translator of French, a writer and a journalist, introduced psychoanalytic achievements into the cultural mainstream. Gustav Bychowski was another scholar who wrote a psychoanalytic study of the personality of the great Romantic poet Juliusz Słowacki (Bychowski, 1930b) who, however, after World War II settled in the United States and did no further work on cultural psychoanalysis regarding Poland. It can be noticed that Iwaszkiewicz and Szymanowski disclosed many religious (mystical) and cultural (sexual) taboos in their works, moving them into the imaginary world of their literary subjects. They were able to do this through aesthetic sublimation.

The erotic ego of the Shepherd can be interpreted as the energy of the individuated force leading him from the masculine ego to the androgynous ego of the King. This path leads from the childlike to that what is masculine, going through what is feminine, to what is human, from the narcissistic ego via the dualistic ego to the androgynous ego. The above is accompanied by the Oedipus complex theme. As it is well known, Oedipus did not recognise his father Laius and King Laius did not recognise his son, Oedipus. Similarly, King Roger does not recognise the Shepherd. King Roger wanted to drive the Shepard out and maybe even kill him, but the wife of the King protected the Shepherd. She urged the King to meet and listen to the Shepherd. This meeting changed the character of the King who went mad and thus in a way killed himself, destroyed his Oedipal ego and abandoned the intention of killing the Shepherd.

This scenario is an attempt to somewhat divert Oedipus' fate that awaited the Shepherd just as this fate could await every young boy who wants to overtake the power of his father. In the Freudian model the idea is that a young boy has to take over the power from his father to become the master, for himself and for his mother, for what is feminine in general.

The characters of the opera can be differentiated according to archetypes - a young man, the Shepherd (shadow archetype), middle-aged woman, Roxanne (anima

archetype) and the elderly scholar Edrisi (wise old man archetype). These figures, as fragments of his Self, allow King Roger to solve his extreme erotic, moral and religious dilemmas.

The analysis of the archetype of the 'King' has been taken up by other composers such as Georg Friedrich Händel (*Xerxes*), Igor Stravinsky (*Oedipus Rex*), Krzysztof Penderecki (*King Ubu*), Hector Berlioz (*King Lear*), Mily Balakirev (*King Lear*), Edvard Grieg (*In the Cave of the Mountain King from the Peer Gynt suite*), Camille Saint-Saëns (*Henry VIII*) and Ludomir Różycki devoted one of his works to King Boleslaw the Bold. Szymanowski's only other opera *Hagith* also concerns the motive of the King: "The old king dies, *Hagith* is sent to be stoned to death. The young king recalls her, but only to receive the news of her death." (Szymanowski, 1984, p 364).

Philosophers have been reluctant to work on opera. Few of them devoted attention to them. J-J. Rousseau composed the opera *Village Soothsaver*, S. Kierkegaard, analysed Mozart's *Don Juan*, F. Nietzsche promoted the works of R. Wagner, and then rejected them, when Christian motives appeared in Germanic, only to then praise G. Bizet's opera - *Carmen*. A study about the opera phenomenon was not so long ago published by M. Dolar and S. Žižek in the *Second Death of Opera*.

The task of opera was originally the aesthetic celebration of injuries, seeking pleasure in what is painful, vitality in what is dead. Opera, as well as other types of creative work played the role of an "aesthetic psychoanalysis." Since the emergence of "psychoanalytic method", one could say that opera as a narrative about race, class, religion, has lost its primary position.

A necessary component of the drama in many operas, is the spectacular death of some woman (anima archetype) who is entangled in an existential drama. Here you can recall the heroine of Alban Berg *Lulu*. In this perspective, *King Roger* stands out as an opera about the death of a man, not a woman. It is about the death of the King, which allows a symbolic transition from the young Shepherd (the animus archetype) to the place occupied by the King (alternative archetype of the old wise man). The same psychoanalytic and archetypal traces can be seen in operas of Stockausen, Berio, Ligeti, Penderecki, Messiaen, Nono, Kagel etc.

II. Oedipal-Dionysian Eroticism - Historical and Mythological contexts

Certainly there are plenty of riddles in Szymanowski's opera which can be read on an erotic level due to the occurrence of the dyads - Edrisi-King, King-Shepherd, King-Roxanne, Roxanne-Shepherd, etc. and the multiple dependency relations between the characters connected with a 'pastoral', 'royal' and 'priesthood' psychology and psychopathy of power, with their 'feminine' and 'masculine' expressions. The staging of royal operas usually exploited erotic patterns of the nineteenth century and tended to describe characters of an infantile sexuality (regressive, perverted, etc.).

The different directors of the opera *King Roger* used the concept of sex described

by Magnus Hirschfeld in *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* and his idea of a 'third gender', a neuter gender, child and non-sexual gender which were the ideas developed in a different form by the co-founder of the psychoanalytic movement, Wilhelm Stekel. The stage managers did not take the ideas presented from 1896 in the Berlin magazine *Der Eigene* by Adolf Brand into account. It promoted Max Stirner's philosophy and later, from 1898 to 1931, the magazine was openly homosexual. The authors, mostly gay men, fought with the negative influence of German doctors and psychiatrists on the 'sexual liberation' movement.

In Poland, the alternative discourse on human sexuality was limited by the influence of Christianity. However, for authors as renowned as Iwazskiewicz and Szymanowski the problem of Oedipal eroticism could not have been unknown. It is shown by referring to a Dionysian legend which can also be read as an Oedipal problem, namely the problem of eroticism which covets money and power that covets erotica itself. Thus the opera *King Roger* represents a variant of the 'Dionysian disease' that spread in Europe at the beginning of the 20th Century as part of alternative religious associations where intellectuals and artists met. *King Roger* represents it in a Slavic style and perhaps with its own Polish component as an alternative to the Oedipal ego which blurs in the feminine identity of the King.

At the beginning of 186 BC the consuls in Rome were called to investigate a secret organisation, i.e. worshipers of the Greek god Dionysos (Bacchus in Latin). A decisive role in promoting the cult was played by itinerant priests, custodians of knowledge about sacred things, handed down from generation to generation.

A Greek who came from Etruria was the first proponent of Bacchic rituals at the river Tiber. Initially, only women were interested in the cult, but when the high priestess of the Greek god became Paculla Minia of Campania (in the early years of the second century before Christ) she re-organised the cult in such a way that male followers joined the cult. Since then, the night meetings on the slopes of the Aventine became widespread. The participants were accused of fornication and homosexual rape. It was said that those who resisted the 'universal crime' were kidnapped by gods or that they were sacrificed to them or they were hidden in a mysterious cave. Many people took part in the Dionysian rituals, including nobles.

The followers of Dionysus-Bacchus gathered without the knowledge of the authorities and created a kind of alternative society including their own political institutions. They were a threat to the existing law and order. There is a record that on the basis of a denunciation submitted to the authorities by Publius Aebutius who was forced by his mother and stepfather to take part in the initiation of Dionysian mysteries, an investigation called *quaestio extra ordinem* was undertaken against the followers of the Greek god.

The priests were arrested and meetings of Bacchic communities prohibited until the positive conclusion of the investigation. Consul Postumius postulated the repression of the followers of Dionysus because they had false religious ideas and promoted foreign traditions of religion. They were found guilty of conspiracy against

the state and many were sentenced to capital punishment. Others, without waiting to be arrested, chose to die by their own hand.

The Roman Senate forbade the Bacchanal celebrations in Rome and throughout Italy, except in places where there was an altar or statue of the deity which had been worshipped for a long time. Senators acknowledged the right to authorise the meetings of followers. Meetings could take place when the number of people participating in the rites did not exceed five. It was forbidden for them to choose a priest or create formal structures of the association. Livy thought that the sources of 'Dionysian disease' were in Etruria, where the Greek who was propagating mysteries at the river Tiber came from.

Europe in the early twentieth century was infected with the 'Dionysian disease'. Religious associations and new religious movements were the alternative societies where intellectuals and artists gathered. These groups were united not only by a mutual intellectual idea but also by a moral idea, i.e. the idea of friendship, love and freedom which usually in such cases, assumed the form of rituals and cults, a kind of mystical order which came up with new ideas to replace the current religious and political system. They were semi-secret, elitist associations joined together by some form of sacred identification, based on symbolic rituals of a sexual nature. These groups were dangerous for any government because they were not controllable and they may have ruled themselves by the idea and not by the institution.

The opera *King Roger* shows an alternative order of power, a new image of the ruler, not the king, but the shepherd who shakes the throne and the state. Perhaps the political motif was more important for Szymanowski than the religious and erotic ones. The opera shows a variant of the 'Dionysian illness' in a Slavic way, but directors forget the 'double', initiatory character of the opera by searching for the difference between Catholic or Greek instead of reading its universal meaning.

Evaluating an opera is not easy, mostly because you read one thing (libretto), see another (costumes, actors, stage decoration) and hear something completely different (music). It is no different with music by Szymanowski which echoes the aesthetics of Arab, Hindu and Buddhist music, and one can also hear the sounds of the orthodox mass and folk songs of Ukraine. The music is differentiated by timbre, the type of suspended sound structure, molar sounds, meditation dynamics, which sometimes rushes and stops in forms full of excitement, sometimes in a form full of solemn celebration creating a remarkable atmosphere.

III. From Antinomy to Duality - King Roger's Individuation Process

The libretto by Iwaszkiewicz and Szymanowski reverses the Oedipal order and the individuation order that shape the Shepherd's Self who is going to 'the Palace of the King'. They show the problems of the King's Self which is in contact with the archetype of the shadow, owing to the priestly rituals. The first sequence of the King Roger opera libretto starts from the Greek and Hebrew words Hagios, hagios,

hagios (Greek: Holy, holy, holy), Kyrios (Greek: Lord), Teos (Greek: God), Sabaoth (Hebrew: Lord of Hosts) which are the names of God mentioned in the Bible. God is worshipped by Cherubs, Powers and the Majesty. The King is a spiritual and political representative of God on earth. The King is a brother, a son and a mirror of God. The King is a mirror and a messenger of God so he is a mediator and a priest of collective life. He must imitate God and articulates His will to the people.

The Shepherd may be an unknown son or brother of the King, who is unaware of that. He comes to him as a wanderer, a fool, a poor fellow, a lunatic, a blind man etc. The libretto of Szymanowski and Iwaszkiewicz is constructed of an antinomy i.e. the divine King is confronted with the divine Shepherd. The first sequence of the opera contains a call for the return of power and justice against the King's sin and guilt. Thanks to the Shepherd that which is alternative becomes normative. The Shepherd is the Messiah of another God, his erotic energy: "Punish him Lord! Let him not utter blasphemy, let him not offend Christ! Oh King, You are the Righteous Judge." On the other hand the Shepherd is "A youngster; his ruddy hair is curly, he is dressed in goat skin as any shepherd would be. His eyes are like stars and his smile is full of mystery." Signs of deities protect and distinguish him. He cannot be removed or killed because he comes from a theological order. He reveals himself as a man, but he is divine. His distinctive marks are his voice, 'eyes' and 'smile'. He proclaims the glory of an 'Unknown God'. He is deemed to be a blasphemer. As the libretto says, "The Shepherd is a young deity replacing Orpheus and Dionysus, Narcissus and Oedipus, saints from Ganges and Benares, Adonis and Don Juan: deities of George Byron and Percy Shelley."

The young God looks in the mirror to see his own face: he is wingless and winged at the same time, wanderer of the world, both earthly and heavenly and he is the inspiration of women's hearts and eyes, a mystical lover; wearing golden shoes, clad in robes made of rose auroras, a shiny butterfly, he is a deity of sight, he lives in what he sees and in what surrounds him, and what protects and decorates him. The green shade of forests, the distant whisper of the sea, thunder storms in the oceans are the language of the Shepherd. His energies are illusion and truth, freedom and pain. He loves and sins, he is a blasphemer and a prophet. He is just as Nietzsche's God – Zarathustra, however still golden Christ throws his shine from the altar, "King, my Lord, punish him!". This language and energy change Roxana's heart.

The second sequence of the libretto shows the confrontation of the Shepherd and the King. Their dialogue is based on negation and a transformation of the prophet-blasphemer relation. They share their spiritual strength, the abyss of death and hell as well as sorcery power. They are completed with singing accompanied with dancing, crying of waves and miseries. English Romantic poets, Byron and Shelley, as well as Kierkegaard, the Protestant theologian and father of existentialism believed that poetry is the new religion. The new religion is coupled with a new erotica.

The King has lost his regular place and is replaced by a wandering deity (Shepherd), a priest without a temple, a king without a kingdom. The King and the Shepherd are

images of the same deity: one is stationary and imperial, patriarchal; the second is nomadic and matriarchal. The Shepherd is a symbolic figure on a religious plane, a pre-Christian synthesis of Greek gods Apollo and Dionysus, who finally reveals himself as the Messiah, Christ (in a 'goat' skin). Though the Shepherd is an icon of the ancient religions as he comes from different mythologies, symbolising their vital, erotic and rebellious plot, he is dependent on the formal religious structure.

The third sequence of the libretto shows the Shepherd who represents the collective unconsciousness of the King's surroundings. The first (the Shepherd) is the aspect of the second (the King), its opposite, which is revealed in times of crisis: "The King smashed his bronze sword...At the trail appeared the great King." The hidden aspect of self – 'God' who appears in the fantasies of the King, takes control over the King. The emotional process of the King's revival is done by the energy of the feminine element and by an act of Oedipal separation, the Shepherd leaving. Then the main role is taken by the character of the court's geographer: "Edrisi! The wings are growing! / They will embrace the whole world! / And from the depths of loneliness, from the depths of my abyss plainly I tear out my heart, I'll sacrifice it to the sun!" This is an announcement of a magical, religious and mystic sacrifice with one's own heart. It is similar to sacrifices in cardio-pathological religions, actually, only David Pountney's production undertook the interpretation of this motif in 2011 in Warsaw.

In fact Edrisi i.e. Abu Abd Allah Muhammad al- Idrisi (1100-1166) was one of the greatest medieval Arab geographers. Idrisi took numerous trips to North Africa, Minor Asia and the Iberian Peninsula. At the request of King Roger II of Sicily he drew up the first map of the Earth after Ptolemy. Idrisi's map, also known as the *Charta Rogeriana*, shows that the total Arab geographical knowledge in this period significantly exceeded the knowledge of European scholars. His role is carried out in secret, on an unconscious level, which controls the system of knowledge of heaven and earth. Great geographers were worshipped equally to holy men, divine deities, they knew the world not only from the perspective of their journeys but also from the prospects of mysticism, cosmology and from the perspective of God. Only geographers and astronomers could see the world as a whole.

David Pountney's 2011 production in Warsaw showed the situation of King Roger from two perspectives, the perspective of Edrisi and Roxana, treating it as an image of erotic games and rituals practiced in the Dionysian sect, which was active in the second century after Christ. In this perspective, Szymanowski's *King Roger* is a story of individuation concerning the Oedipal ego, a narcissistic wound, symbiotic relationship with a woman, the separation and collision of one's own self with the spiritual power which reveals itself periodically in images and experiences of nothingness. Szymanowski uses the story of King Roger II to tell a tale about losing his own father.

In the process of psychological development of the Oedipal ego, as a way to capture his father's erotic power, the great role is played by the idea of 'duality', 'dyad', 'dual-oneness'. Its character is one of 'reparation' and it is a response to

traumatic experiences. The need for, and even obsession, of 'dual oneness' is the basis of all love relationships, not just of sexual ones but also the creative sort. It is based on the symbiotic tendencies, one's own ego into a foreign body. In the case of an artist or philosopher it is based on the need 'to beget in beauty' (Plato).

IV. The Dyadic Ego - Development and Transgressive Eroticism

More than half of Szymanowski's works are of dual authorship, literary and musical, music composed by him and texts by poets (Kazimierz Przerwa Tetmajer, Jan Kasprowicz, Waclaw Berent, Stanislaw Wyspiański, Tadeusz Miciński, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna, Jerzy Liebert, Alfred Mombert, Friedrich von Bodenstedt, Mieczysław Reif, Richard Dehmel, Hafiz from Shiraz, Jalal Ad-Din Rumi, Rabindranath Tagore, James Joyce and Homer, Jalal Ad-Din).

The same duality applies to his operas *Hagith* (1913) and *King Roger* (1918-1924). The analysis fantasised by the Oedipal ego refers us to a variety of literary contexts, for example, *The Prince and the Pauper* by Mark Twain, *Hour of thought* by Juliusz Słowacki, *The Transposed Heads* by Thomas Mann. Choosing different identities is a continual process of transgression based on attempts to locate one's ego in another object. When it is successful, the ego becomes dyadic (post-Oedipal) and not narcissistic when such a transfer is not successful. It is a dyadic ego, friendly, mirror-like, more confident and stronger. This is not a narcissistic ego, as some research seems to show.

The dyadic ego arises from the initiation of the practicing of one's sexual identities within one's own sexuality. Without the possibility of transferring one's sexual ego to another object if it is a male ego, it must confront the fatherly ego. This confrontation is for the father, but it is also a threat to the son. It must end with conflict, leaving, escape or murder but it might be verbal and fantasised. Thus, in the process of auto-sexual or homosexual individuation, self-realisation is a prophylactics against the negative effects of the Oedipus complex.

Hence, Oedipal and non-Oedipal sexual practices of the Shepherd are not pathological, they simply develop. In any case, there is nothing pathological in the libretto of *King Roger*. It is rather the story of initiation, in which the Oedipal ego becomes androgynous and reaches the level of the self. The Oedipal ego is neutralised by an erotic alternative behaviour during the individual development of self and thus it can realise itself as a meta-sexual androgynous ego.

In order to support this thesis, an analogical reasoning can be carried out referring to the theory of the analytical psychologist Erich Neumann, a student of Jung, who described the mental development phases of women, highlighting seven steps: 1) self-preservation phase (*Selbstbewahrung*), 2) breaking of manhood (3-6 years, fear and fascination), 3) the phase of submission and resignation (*Selbstaufgabe*), 4) the imprisonment of a woman in patriarchy, 5) meeting a man, 6) phase of dedication,

self-commitment (*Selbsthingabe*), 7) the phase of self-realisation, a meeting with the self. If this model is right, it can also be applied to the development of man (Neumann, 1994).

Only the direction of the identification changes. In the second point instead of the breaking of masculinity there is breaking of femininity into the boy's ego and this experience is also linked with fear and fascination. In the fourth phase, the boy should leave the feminine values to endorse the masculine ones but then his masculinity can get stuck in matriarchy. This gives the effect of pseudo-inversion (matriarchal homosexuality). If this happens, then in the fifth phase, the meeting with a woman should occur. When this does not occur, the situation of the man's development worsens because he cannot define his proper identity.

When we look at the structure of the libretto and the characters outlined in it, nothing threatens the masculine identity of the Shepherd. Therefore, interpretations of the content of *King Roger* through focusing on the Oedipus complex are stuck in the wrong place. As this opera describes the travel of the Oedipal ego through its own initiation system of a Dionysian type and its shift into the Apollonian type in which it becomes more balanced, less aggressive, less dependent on the eroticism of the body and more sensitive to eroticism of the mind (soul).

The first review of the first staging of *King Roger* (Warsaw 1926) stressed the expression of the 'Hellenistic cult' of Dionysus over the 'Christian worship' of Christ. Szymanowski thought that the review is an example of misunderstanding. He judged the comments after the first performance of the opera as wrong and 'unfair'. One who knows the text of the libretto of the opera knows that it is saturated with religious content, referring to ancient Greece, Persia, Rome, Asia and Europe. The style of the writing refers to fairy tales, parables, visions and meditation.

Here is an excerpt from the review: "I do not know if you can understand and grasp (in original writing – I do not know if masses [of people] understand and grasp the weight") this artistic beauty of victory of heathen beliefs over Christianity, the victory of a Hellenistic cult of nature over the medieval superstition and cruelty – and, finally, the thesis: someone who uses pleasure to the highest degree is a god. – [I don't think this] will impress Polish souls imbued in centuries of Catholicism." (Wieniawski, *Rzeczpospolita* newspaper on 20th and 22nd June 1926, quoted in Szymanowski, 1984, p. 493)

Adam Wieniawski's interpretation, criticised by Szymanowski, aptly demonstrates one of the layers of meaning of the libretto but this meaning was not the composer's intention. "It is difficult, indeed, to get a more inaccurate formula of the understanding of the fundamental of the idea of *King Roger*". (Szymanowski, 1984, p. 493) We read further: "First of all, the identification of medieval superstition and cruelty with the idea of a Christian and Hellenistic spirit with cheap hedonism: religion of use and pleasure has introduced a direct entangled confusion of concepts. Besides, accusing the authors of the drama, brought up in Catholic culture deeply rooted in the Hellenistic spirit, of promoting a promiscuous or rather extremely naive idea of the

victorious pagan beliefs - directly brings this confusion to absurdity.” (Szymanowski, 1984, p. 493-494)

For the composer, this opinion was unpleasant, because he experienced spiritual ambivalence as he lived on the border of Catholic and Orthodox Ukraine. Szymanowski was thinking for some time of engaging more actively in the culture of ‘imperial’ Russia and he was well established in the ‘royal’ system of the self the entire time, enslaved then by three invaders of Poland for 123 years. Only the outbreak of the 1917 revolution and the restoration of independence in 1918 had an impact on that ‘royal motif’ of Polish culture and the collective self which allowed him to change his orientation. However, this duality was manifested throughout Szymanowski’s life at different levels of his work.

V. The Androgynous Ego - Spirituality and Eroticism

The spiritual nature of duality of the creative ego is presented in the idea of androgyny and the problem is best represented in the Christian philosophy of the Russian existentialist Nikolai Berdyaev. He believed that the general understanding of the sexual and spiritual identity of man is wrong. Too often love and sexuality are identified as the same thing while sexuality is treated as something shameful: “This dominant, in various forms, consciousness says something although shamefully about the sexual act and leaves the sexual love in silence. It talks of sex but forgets about love. Sexual love, in fact, does not fit into the category of family or asceticism, or fornication.” (Berdyaev, 2001, p. 173).

Thus there are different kinds of love and one must take into account not only the sexual dimension of love but also the spiritual aspect. The one dimension does not exist without the other and their detachment degrades love and sexuality but does not make them dependent on each other. According to Berdyaev there are three types of Christian love: 1) friendship love, 2) brotherly love (universal), and 3) androgynous love. Of the three types, Berdyaev puts the androgynous love in the highest place, which, in his opinion, reveals the meaning of all love.

“Androgyny is the ultimate union of the masculine and feminine element in a higher God like being, it is a final overcoming of the disintegration and division which restores man to the likeness of God. Love is the restoration of the virginity lost by man, Sofia. Androgyny is the solution to the mystery why in the Absolute Man i.e. Christ’s sexual life was not perceived because in his person there was no division which produces our earthly sex life.” (Berdyaev, 2001, p. 187).

A positive idea of psycho-physical perfection which implies the idea of celibacy based on meta-sexual love finds its inspiration in androgyny. This love-hope is complete, eternal and exemplary. Its human component requires going beyond the certainties of day and night, beyond the duality of sex, in the direction of the divine idea of the Trinity which creates unity in complete diversity.

Individuation unites contradictions under the principle that changes negative

experiences into their positive oppositions. It is an experience of completeness in absence, presence in absence, expectation in resignation, coming in leaving, meeting in departing, on the border and border states which unite and separate in the One. In fact, the *King Roger* opera is primarily an individuation mystery based on the ritual of the Orthodox mass. Thus, the reaction of Szymanowski to the review of the premiere seems understandable.

Most opera directors, fascinated by the topic of gender or psychoanalysis, generally could not cope with the problem of androgyny in *King Roger*. Finally, David Pountney managed to do it in his staging of the opera in Warsaw (2011) by further emphasising the issue of androgyny dressing the singers in clothes of Buddhist monks. A reference to Buddhist spirituality reflects the contemporary spiritual message of the opera in a better way than a reference to the spiritual system of Christianity.

In *King Roger*, we have music full of introvert attitudes, inhibitions, with some sort of vitality which is full of longing for what has gone and what has not yet happened. The music is full of dilemmas of love in the form of energy transferred from character to another character, tying them by an invisible thread of physical and spiritual sound. Szymanowski's music harmonizes well with the literary layer of the opera. Iwaszkiewicz language is sensitive to the colour of words, to their dynamics of what is masculine and feminine at different levels of meaning. Szymanowski's opera score could be complete without the libretto because it is a work capable of independent existence. You could say that the mere fact of the meeting of a literary text and music is worthy of creating a separate opera.

VI. Artistic Vitality and Creativity - Szymanowski and Elzenberg

One of the most renowned Polish existentialists, Elzenberg described Szymanowski's music and creative attitude in a note titled: "Does artistic work require sacrifices?" (written on 26/02/1924): "Yesterday, at a concert of Szymanowski, I had such a strong impression: well, see, here in front of you there are artists who create with joy and without this insane split between the ideal and life. I looked at Mrs Szymanowska, I looked at the poet Iwaszkiewicz speaking (...), I looked at Szymanowski, thinking to myself how much sky and sun must be in the radiation of his music with more and more poems, but he always chooses the youthful, ironic, spirited, and full of verve, the verve is combined with his joyfulness and beauty blooms from all of it without shamanism and pompous celebration. He does not bother chasing some 'ideal world', which would fundamentally oppose life! I thought of my exaltation when thinking about those topics, I remembered Nietzsche: "Idealismus, höherer Schwindel". (cf. H. Elzenberg, 2002, p. 167). Idealism prohibits the integration of one's own self with the shadow (cf. Jung), and this integration is a prerequisite for the further individuation of the Self.

Elzenberg's second comment concerned the poetry of Iwaszkiewicz which Szymanowski used to compose his songs, which were performed by his vocally

talented sister, and here the evaluation of this poetry is negative. The philosopher rejects the possibility of its acceptance and states that if he had to accept it, “it would be capitulation”, giving as an example the work of Waclaw Berent: “He thought about his work, really cleansed from raw admixture, did he sacrifice a lot for it? (...) No, the slogan ‘the art at the expense of life’, this is not a humbug!” (cf. H. Elzenberg, 2002, p 168). Renunciation is a compromise, and this is part of the integration of the artist’s lightsome ego with his dark ego. This is in turn a precondition for any creative work of significant cultural dimensions.

Another issue is the use of poetry and all literary works by composers of the first half of the twentieth century. Here is a comment by Elzenberg from 1933: “Today clearly favours visual art more than music. Therefore, painting quality [in poetry] and also knowledge when compared with the period of Young Poland, is getting better. Who could then write something like Tuwim’s *The Jews*, or something completely different like Pawlikowska’s poems where these ‘sad triangles’ look at ‘white crosses’ and ‘yellow hooks’? In contrast, the musicality of poetry is dry: the bottom can be seen in a dried stream. (...) Now, considering Szymanowski’s music, you can add music to a completely non-musical poem, and what is more, musicality which is too palpable disturbs a composer’s work and joining the two kinds of art together. Try to add music to Poe’s ‘Helen, thy beauty is to me...’, and as a result you only spoil the poem” (cf. H. Elzenberg, 2002, p.230).

Szymanowski did not ruin the poetic texts and he did not spoil the libretto by Iwazkiewicz. He showed that they can co-exist on an equal footing even when the musicality of words is reduced to a level of meaning and the music itself justifies and interprets the soul differently than a word which is focused on the management of thinking.

In an apocryphal gospel, we read: “Light and dark, life and death, right and left are brothers to each other, you cannot separate them from each other. Therefore, neither good are good, nor evil are evil, neither the living live, nor dead are raised. Therefore, each of them will return again to their primary state. Once elevated above the world they are inseparable, eternal” (cf. Starowieyski, ed.. 1986. p.124). The libretto of the *King Roger* opera can be understood as a message about the great unity of the contradictory elements of the human being and the world and human life, about the equal power of the King and the Shepherd.

Summary

The meeting of two egos – the royal and the pastoral, the erotic and the aesthetic, does not lead to a complete breakdown in *King Roger* although at the beginning there are various tensions. Finally, there is a specific reconciliation, one character complements the other, replaces him and brings balance to the kingdom, restoring its lost power and potency. That is how the myth of unity is brought into life. The idea of androgyny has its mythological and biblical roots.

The biblical idea of androgyny is present in Christian gnosis and Jewish mysticism but it is absent in the rational thought of the Christian West. It is, however, as has already been shown above, present in mystical thoughts of the Christian East, whose heirs were Iwaszkiewicz and Szymanowski, the authors of the libretto. For them, the androgynous message was clear and implemented in their work.

The need for perfection and idealism, led them to seek states of trance which would allow them even in a minimal way to feel the world that does not exist. The opposite of this position is erotic and anthropological scepticism, and even radical nihilism, which is summarised in the words of Jacques Lacan: “Love is giving something that does not exist”, “the woman does not exist”, “there is no sexual intercourse”. (cf. J. Lacan, 1996). The authors of the opera would not expect this sort of effects of their work, accepting even an extreme interpretation of it. Music and literature in Szymanowski’s *King Roger* are used in man’s initiation on equal terms, taking sometimes the function of directing the spiritual dimensions of human behaviour.

In *King Roger*, the music is full of the dilemmas, expressed in energy transferred from character to character, tying them by an invisible thread of physical and spiritual sound. Szymanowski’s music harmonizes well with the literary layer of the opera, as the language of Iwaszkiewicz is sensitive to the colour of words, to their dynamics of what is masculine and feminine in them at different levels of meaning. His opera could be complete without the libretto because it is a work capable of independent existence. You could say that the mere fact of putting together literary text and music makes it worthwhile to create the opera.

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Summary

The paper is an attempt to analyse the drama dynamics and structure of Karol Szymanowski's opera *King Roger* by looking at its three dimensions: the historical-mythological, the erotic-aesthetic and the religious-mystical. We do this by means of Carl G. Jung's archetypal psychology focusing on the individuation process and archetypes (ego, shadow, anima and animus, great mother, wise old man), Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis relating to the issue of narcissism and the Oedipus complex, and in the context of references to two existential thinkers, Berdyaev and Elzenberg. In the paper, it is assumed that the creative process is a kind of ego-analysis. We study the different partial selves or egos forming and disintegrating the Self, engaging the unconsciousness and consciousness of the authors.

Key words: opera *King Roger*, Karol Szymanowski, individuation, transgression, culture, aesthetics.

OPERA *KRÓL ROGER* KAROLA SZYMANOWSKIEGO. INDYWIDUACJA, TRANSGRESJA EROTYCZNA I ESTETYKA MUZYCZNA

Streszczenie

Tekst jest próbą analizy dramatu budowy opery *Król Roger* Karola Szymanowskiego z perspektywy trzech jej wymiarów: historyczno-mitologicznej, erotyczno-estetycznej i religijno-mistycznej. Do tego wykorzystujemy psychologię głębi Karla G. Junga (proces indywiduacji, archetypy - ego, cień, anima i animus, wielka matka, stary mędrzec) oraz psychoanalizę Zygmunta Freuda (narcyzm, kompleks Edypa), a także konteksty dwóch egzystencjalistów, Bierdiajewa i Elzenberga. W tekście zakładamy, że proces twórczy jest rodzajem ego-analizy. Badamy różne "ja" tworzące i dezintegrujące jaźń, przy których angażowana jest nieświadomość i świadomość twórców.

Słowa kluczowe: opera *Król Roger*, Karol Szymanowski, indywidualizacja, transgresja, kultura, estetyka.

